Boyd Camak holds a critical view of Western Civilization, strongly distinguishing it from Christ's Kingdom. He sees preoccupations with Western Civilization as a significant "trap" that misrepresents the true nature of Christian faith.

Here are the key aspects of Camak's view on Western Civilization:

- **Not the Kingdom of God**: Camak asserts that Western Civilization is a **historical and cultural construct, not a divine entity**. He believes it is a "theological category mistake of enormous consequence" to confuse the gospel with the fortunes of the West.
- **Mixed Record of Brilliance and Brutality**: He acknowledges Western Civilization's achievements, such as philosophy, art, music, rule of law, and moral ideals, but also its evils, including **colonization, slavery, racism, materialism, and nationalism**.
- **Irrelevant Cultural Artifact**: Camak considers the idea of Western Civilization to be a **"cultural artifact" that is "completely irrelevant" to the lives of Christ's children**. Its perceived importance is merely due to its physical and temporal proximity.
- **Critique of Conflation with Christ's Kingdom**: He specifically criticizes various groups, including "politically active, conservative American Roman Catholics" and the "Christian Nationalist Movement," for **conflating Christ's Kingdom with Western Civilization or America**. He views this as a "profound theological error".
- **Christ's Kingdom as Reality**: In contrast to Western Civilization, Camak defines Christ's Kingdom as **"Reality" (with a capital R)**, which is veiled and hidden and needs to be revealed. He states that Christ's Lordship is Reality and does not need to be enforced, but rather revealed, as Jesus did on the cross. Clinging to Christ's Kingdom is "living at the center of the known world".
- **Betrayal of the Early Church's Witness**: Confusing the gospel with the fortunes of the West is seen as a "betrayal of the early church's witness," which thrived as a marginalized and persecuted minority, not an imperial force.
- **Alignment with Kierkegaard and Bonhoeffer**: Camak's stance aligns with thinkers like **Kierkegaard**, who viewed Christendom as a dilution and betrayal of Jesus, and **Bonhoeffer**, who advocated for "religionless Christianity" and radical discipleship. He also references T.S. Eliot's warning against the Church's task being "saving civilization".
- **The Gospel's Independence**: For Camak, the gospel is not fragile and does not need to be "protected." It does not depend on Rome, Geneva, Washington, or London, but **only on Christ crucified and risen**.
- **Historical Ties to Empire**: He hypothesizes that Christianity is **less amenable to critical thinking because of its historical ties to empire**. He states, "I cannot be for Jesus and for empire".

In summary, Camak views Western Civilization, and any attempt to conflate it with Christ's Kingdom, as a distraction and a distortion of authentic Christianity, which he believes is centered on the unveiled reality of Christ's suffering love and internal liberation.

Boyd Camak and Peter Kreeft both engage deeply with the themes of Western Civilization and the Christian faith, but their perspectives reveal some notable contrasts and emphases.

1. Relationship to Western Civilization:
- Camak sharply distinguishes Western Civilization from Christ's Kingdom, viewing the former as a human cultural artifact with a mixed legacy of brilliance and brutality, and as theologically irrelevant or even misleading when conflated with the gospel. For him, Western Civilization is not the Kingdom of God and such conflation is a profound theological error.
- Kreeft affirms the significance of Western Civilization more appreciatively, recognizing its cultural achievements and moral foundations rooted in Christian truths. He presents Western Civilization as something valuable to be preserved and restored through wisdom, virtue, and particularly through fostering life and family (e.g., encouraging having children as crucial to civilization's survival). He critiques modernity's errors and calls for a retrieval of ancient and medieval wisdom to save Western Civilization.

2. The Kingdom of God and Christian Identity:
- Camak focuses on Christ's Kingdom as a transcendent, spiritual Reality "veiled and hidden," revealed through Christ's suffering, and independent of cultural or political power. He warns against Christianity being tied to empire, nationalism, or political identity.
- Kreeft, coming from a Catholic philosophical standpoint, emphasizes living as "soldiers of the King" engaged in spiritual warfare, practicing virtues, and fighting against worldliness using poverty, chastity, and obedience. While accepting that the Kingdom of God is ultimately spiritual, he also sees Christian civilization as part of the broader context where this battle for faith and virtue occurs.

3. Critique of Modernity and Cultural Crisis:
- Both critique modernity and the cultural shifts away from traditional Christian values.
- Camak tends toward a more radical rejection of the idea that the gospel requires protection by or identification with any empire or culture.
- Kreeft provides a defense of Western Civilization's Christian roots and calls for renewal by reclaiming the wisdom and virtue that originally shaped it, framing the crisis as cultural decay remedied by spiritual and moral revival.

4. Theological Tone and Approach:
- Camak's take is strongly theological and prophetic, aligned with thinkers like Kierkegaard and Bonhoeffer, emphasizing the gospel's independence and purity from worldly power.
- Kreeft adopts a more optimistic and constructive tone, blending philosophy, theology, and cultural critique to offer practical wisdom and encouragement for preserving Christian civilization.

In summary, Boyd Camak's view is more focused on maintaining a clear separation between the Kingdom of God and any cultural or civilizational identity, warning against theological errors tied to empire and nationalism. Peter Kreeft, while also critical of modernity's excesses, embraces

Western Civilization as a valued cultural expression with Christian foundations worthy of preservation and renewal through virtue and wisdom.

Thus, Camak's perspective is more cautionary and theologically radical about the distinctness of Christ's Kingdom from Western civilization, whereas Kreeft is more integrative, hopeful, and focused on the cultural and spiritual defense and restoration of Western Christian civilization. Both offer valuable but differing responses to the relationship between faith and culture in the modern world.

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